

# Global Health Research Priority Setting

A survey of the views  
of NIH-funded infectious disease researchers

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# Study Objectives

- To determine how researchers feel global health research priorities are set
- To identify barriers to successful international health research
- To verify what was believed to be “truths” about international health research priority setting and research barriers
- To aid in future planning and priority setting in international research

# 1. Methods

## Questionnaire

- Questionnaire was distributed at the International Centers for Tropical Diseases Research (ICTDR) Network meeting in Bethesda, MD in May 2004
- Questionnaire contained 11 statements on research priority setting and research barriers
- Participants responded using a 5 point Likert Scale (strongly agree- strongly disagree)
- In addition, essay comments were encouraged after each section (5 lines)

# Study population

## 1. Demographics

### ■ Seniority

- 61% Senior Researchers/Directors
- 39% Junior Researchers

### ■ Gender

- 70% Male, 30% Female

### ■ Origin of Researchers

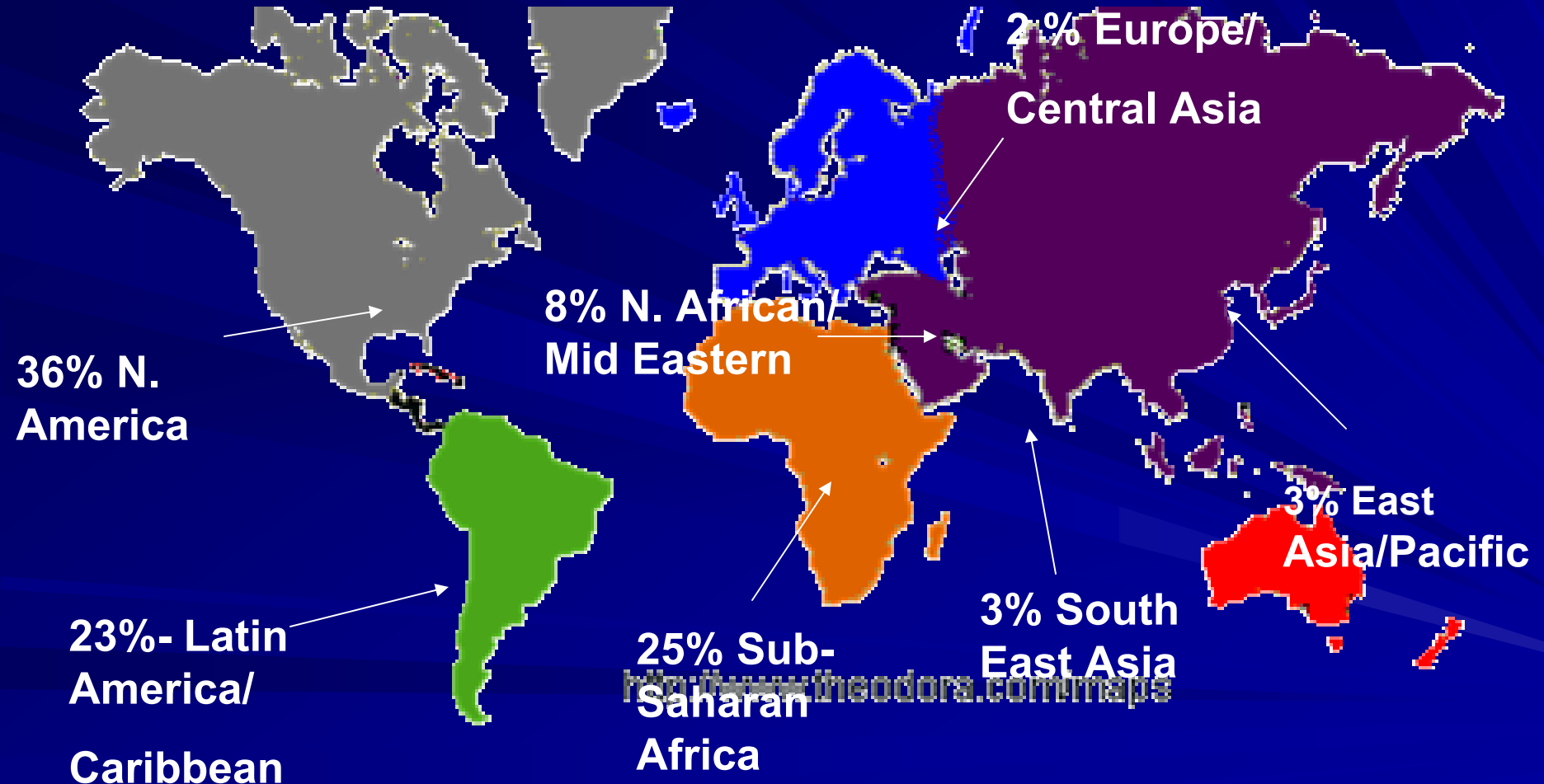
- 64% from LMICs
- 36% from HICs

### ■ Income level of country where research is conducted

- 91% from low/middle income countries (LMIC)

# Study population

## 1. Citizenship of Study Population



# Results

## 2. Priority Setting

<b>What are the factors determining research priorities generally in international health?</b>	<b>5- strongly agree 1- strongly disagree</b>
Burden of disease has become an important factor in setting global priorities for health R&D in international health .	<b>4.2</b>
International health research priorities are driven by the needs of developed countries	<b>3.9</b>
International health research priorities are driven by the needs of developing countries.	<b>3.1</b>
The type of science prioritized should be the same in all countries.	<b>3.0</b>
International health problems are best addressed by investing in modern highly developed technology.	<b>2.9</b>

# Results

## 3. Research Barriers

<b>What are the barriers to success in international health research generally?</b>	<b>5- strongly agree 1- strongly disagree</b>
A lack of sustained funding.	<b>4.3</b>
The difficulty in bringing research closer together to operational activities in health policy decision-making in resource poor countries	<b>4.3</b>
A lack of adequately trained and supported scientific leaders.	<b>3.9</b>
A lack of adequately trained technical and management staff.	<b>3.8</b>
A lack of a “science culture” and appreciation of the importance of science and analytical capability at the country level.	<b>3.5</b>
A lack of high-tech equipment.	<b>3.2</b>



# Results

## 4. Major Themes in written comments

- **Need for LMIC's to give more political (and financial) support to health research**

“Poor or developing countries should begin to invest in and value research. This may be difficult in the context of competing priorities but in the long run it will pay off” **Senior Researcher from Sub Saharan Africa**

- **Communication barriers exist between policy-makers and researchers**

“Improvements can be achieved if policy makers and scientist collaborate through frequent interactions.” **Junior Researcher from Sub Saharan Africa**

- **Priorities should be set based on burden of disease in the LMICs**

“Factors such as national disease morbidity, mortality, disability, and economic toll should be crucial (in priority setting)”. **Senior Researcher from Latin America**



# Implications

- **Political will in LMICs appears to greatly impact both research priority setting and the success of health research**
- **Efforts to bridge the communication gap between researchers and policy makers in LMICS may be needed to ensure that research results DO influence policy**
- **Burden of disease can be further used by LMICS to help them advocate for their research priorities needs at the global level**

# Caveats

- Views from a group of researchers funded by NIH might not be representative of views among all researchers in each country
- Not a lot of women were queried
- Questionnaire had room for improvement – we will make this available in the public domain to inspire future surveys
- Nevertheless, this attempt to generate “field data” on the views of international researchers is nearly unique
  - Only one other survey study by WHO has been identified

# THANK YOU!!

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